



Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council

Meeting Agenda and Minutes

Date	September 1, 2022
Time	2:00pm – 4:00pm
Location	Herschler Building Extension Room 1 - 122 West 25th Street, Capital Extension, Cheyenne - MAP Call In Information: https://uwyo.zoom.us/j/202849015 , (669) 900-6833, Meeting ID: 202 849 015
Purpose	To assist and advise the Division of Healthcare Financing (Division) in implementing a statewide service delivery system for persons who are identified as having developmental and intellectual disabilities, and acquired brain injuries (ABI).
Members	Rita Basom(late), Ginny Chidsey, Maria Clark, Brenda Dick, Heather Dodson , Jeff Gardner (late), Kayla Green, Buck Gwyn, Arkansas Le Marr, Erin O'Neill, Sandy Root-Elledge, Bob Sell
Division Staff	Matt Crandall, Elizabeth Forslund, Lee Grossman, Dillion Johnson, Samantha Mills, Shirley Pratt, Julie Lacey
TOPICS AND HIGHLIGHTS	
1.	<u>Roll Call and Approval of Minutes</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ginny, serving as temporary Chairperson until Chair arrived, called the meeting to order at 2:03pm. Arkansas moved to approve the minutes of June 2, 2022; Bob seconded. Motion carried.
2.	<u>Division Updates</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) update and feedback from Council members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lee reviewed the ARPA spending plan and narrative that was submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on July 18th. As requested by a Council member, the waitlist process for school aged children was discussed. The application process for the Supports Waiver is not dependent on age, so outdated information that suggests that children who are on the waiting list have to reapply when they turn 21 is inaccurate, and may be a hold over from when there were separate adult and child waivers. There is no need to reapply, although eligibility may need to be redetermined prior to an individual being offered a funding opportunity. The current waiting time is approximately three years for the Supports Waiver. If an individual has needs that meet emergency criteria, they may be considered for the Comprehensive Waiver. If there are questions, contact the area Benefits and Eligibility Specialist. <u>Member comment:</u> The Department of Education would appreciate the Division providing more information on waiver services and the application process. A stakeholder input session was conducted on August 8, 2022, and approximately 60 people attended. Although most of the conversation focused on Community Choices Waiver initiatives, the Division did seek input from stakeholders of the Comprehensive and Supports Waiver programs on current initiatives and proposed updates. As of June 30, 2022 the Division has spent over \$2.4 million dollars, or 11.47% of the projected spending, on provider reimbursement rate increases. The Division has partnered with the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities to develop and implement case manager training focused on

person centered planning. WIND is seeking input from case managers in order to get their perspective on what they need for trainings, and have reached out to participants as well.

- Member question: Were providers included in the call for topics for the case manager training?
Division response: *No. However, many of the case managers are also providers of other waiver services.*
- Member comment: From a provider perspective, most larger providers went into last fiscal year operating at a deficit, and many increased wages and provided staff bonuses to maintain services. The personnel costs were largely covered by the rate increase, which is appreciated. However, providers are unable to make much headway on the deficits that existed outside of the personnel expenses. As an example, one provider budgeted \$30,000 for fuel costs but spent \$60,000, and there is no way to account or make up for that difference. Division response: *The Division did not expect the 7% increase to address all of the problems. Rates were informed by the cost study, but the reality experienced has been different.*
- ARPA Staff Stabilization Funds administered by the Wyoming Hospital Association
 - The Wyoming Department of Health Director's Office and Division received questions from providers that received a letter from the Wyoming Hospital Association (WHA), offering a one-time disbursement of federal funds (CDFA #21.027) to specified providers.
 - This was a legitimate communication from the WHA. The State of Wyoming delegated the WHA to disperse these funds to identified providers for the purpose of addressing their staff retention efforts, per the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) appropriations made by the Wyoming Legislature in Senate Enrolled Act 20 from the 2022 Budget Session. While the Division did not directly administer these funds, we did highly recommend that providers return the requested information so they could benefit from this one-time funding.
 - Member comment: WCSP members are grateful for the opportunity; however, this funding still does not fix the problem because it was so focused on how it could be spent and who can benefit. We are thankful as many of the providers that have not been able to reinforce retention were able to use the funds to do so.
- September 1 Legislative rate increase
 - Increases to provider reimbursement rates for Adult Day Services (ADS) - High Level and Community Living Services (CLS) - Levels 5 and 6 went into effect on September 1, 2022. During the recent legislative session, the State of Wyoming's 66th Legislature passed [Senate File SF0001](#), which provided additional funding to be appropriated "to developmental disability agency providers, as defined in the most recent developmental disability rate rebasing report." This increase was specific to agency providers, so participant-directed employees and independent providers are not eligible for these increases. This increase was not paid through ARPA funds.
 - Member comment: Originally there was information shared that ACES\$ providers were included in the increase? Was the legislature aware that participant-directed services weren't included? Division response: *When the bill was first passed, the Division did provide some inaccurate guidance. This inaccuracy was corrected in future communications and frequently asked questions.*
 - Member comment: The provider type and services included were determined by the Legislature.
 - Member comment: The High Needs Model reflected in the rate study was used to determine agency types and services. The implementation has been smooth.

- In addition to the rate increase, the amendments for the Supports and Comprehensive Waivers included very specific service definitions that include virtual support and remote monitoring. The Division worked closely with CMS to get the needed elements in place to allow these service delivery models. There is not a decrease in rate when these delivery models are used. The Division sees these options as a way to address staffing concerns.
- Virtual support is available for participants who receive ADS - Basic and CLS - Basic levels. Remote monitoring is available for participants who receive CLS - Basic Daily level and Levels 3 and 4. More information can be found on the [Service Definitions and Rates](#) page of the Division website.
- Member comment: The main roadblock for remote monitoring is guardians and case managers. There needs to be education and support so stakeholders see this is an option. *Division response: WIND has reached out, and the Division will be presenting an ECHO session on remote monitoring. Additionally, we will reach out to the Governor's Council to see how we can provide more education on this option.*
- Member comment: This will not replace staff, but will help to address staffing needs.
- Member question: Was there a set percentage given to agency providers? What was the amount? *Division response: The Legislature did not issue a percentage. They appropriated \$3,221,343 for rate increases.*
- National Core Indicator (NCI) surveys
 - The NCI Staff Stability Survey ended on July 31, 2022. Wyoming had a 62.5% completion rate, which is 12% higher than last year.
 - Vital Research (VR) has been contracted to complete the NCI-IDD surveys. Surveys will be complete by June 30, 2023, but we won't have data until later in 2023 or early 2024. Sampling is random, so not everyone will be invited to participate in the survey.
 - Training will take place in October, and VR has indicated that they will begin surveying approximately two weeks after training is completed.
 - The Division is working with VR to send information about the survey process to participants prior to beginning the surveys.
 - Member question: How do the results of these surveys translate into public policy? *Division response: CMS is focusing on new standardized quality measures that shift the conversation from outputs and focus more on participant experience. Information on these proposed measures would come, in large part, from participant surveys...specifically the NCI...and evaluate quality of services.*
 - Member question: Are provider types broken down, or is there a way to distinguish provider types? *Division response: Although some information is collected on group home living, provider types are not distinguished since every state system and provider pool looks different.*
 - Member question: Has there been discussion about tying rates to outcomes or quality. *Division response: This has been a national conversation, but implementation is more challenging. There have been pilot projects, but no real successes.*
 - Member comment: From the education perspective, it has been impossible to tie pay to individuals who are doing a better job. It is a nice idea, but difficult to find criteria that are fair for all providers.
- System updates
 - The Division has made several enhancements to the Information Management for Providers (IMPROV) and Wyoming Health Provider (WHP) portal systems. These enhancements moved

	<p>the provider initial certification and certification renewal to an online platform. The Division is also working on an online change process that will allow providers to submit changes about their organization online, rather than contacting the Division or completing a form. The change would be submitted through the WHP portal, and the Division would be able to approve the change online. Robust education will be provided prior to implementing the change.</p>
3.	<p><u>Innovation Grants for Technology Projects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council was reminded of the Innovation Grant Overview and draft Funding Opportunity Announcement that was sent with the meeting materials. • Under ARPA, these grants are allowed and have been approved. However, in order to receive the 50% federal financial participation (FFP), the Division must reframe this funding into an allowable waiver service, which must meet specific CMS criteria and eliminates many of the innovative options allowed under ARPA. The Council was asked to provide feedback on the best use for this funding, and if the innovation grant benefits outweighed the monetary loss associated with not receiving the FFP. • <u>Member comment:</u> We like the flexibility offered through the innovation grants and that providers can implement projects to help multiple people is intriguing. Is the specialized equipment service currently being used, and is it adequate? <u>Division response:</u> <i>The current service definition does create barriers to people utilizing this service, and these barriers would need to be resolved before we could allow more flexibility with a specialized equipment service.</i> • <u>Member comment:</u> Specialized equipment would help fewer people. The innovation grants have the potential to help more. • <u>Member comment:</u> The Wyoming Assistive Technology Resources (WATR) has experienced a number of requests that cannot be met because of service caps. If possible, it would be great to split the money to allow some to be used for individuals needs and the rest to go toward grants. <u>Division response:</u> <i>This type of approach is possible, but the tradeoff of splitting the use is that it will further dilute the amount of money available for grants. There will come a tipping point when the grant is no longer cost effective.</i> • <u>Member comment:</u> Even though the available funding would be decreased, knowing how hard it is to recruit and keep staff, it would be interesting to see what organizations might come up with to retain staff, and the grant approach would bring out the great ideas that providers are considering. As a caveat, it would be good to consider the cost benefit of administering the grants. • <u>Member question:</u> Would this be a reimbursement grant? Would there be a required match? <u>Division response:</u> <i>This would not be a reimbursement grant. The funds would be released to the provider in a lump sum. There is no match required.</i> • <u>Member comment:</u> I like the idea of releasing the money ahead of time. More providers will be interested if they don't have to front the costs. • <u>Member question:</u> Will it affect my money or services? <u>Division response:</u> <i>No. These grants would not impact participant budgets. The goal is to help providers support people.</i> • Council members may be asked to sit on the independent panel that will be assembled to review grant applications. • <u>Member comment:</u> There are a number of programs that follow a similar process. The Daniels Fund invites people to read and score applications. If they have a vested interest, they cannot read and score their own application. The Wyoming Arts Council has the applications publicly available. To promote transparency, this might be something to consider. • Based on the conversation, the Division has determined that the funding tradeoff does not appear to be a reason not to consider the innovation grants.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Member comment:</u> It isn't a deal breaker, but the Division should still weigh the cost benefit of administering a grant project.
4.	<p><u>Member updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new superintendent has been elected, so the Department of Education is gearing up for the changes that come with leadership change. • Workforce services recently completed the state audit. It was a great experience and, although a formal report has not been issued, it went well. They are currently about a month out on new referrals, and there are challenges associated with hiring and training new staff members. It can be difficult to find quality individuals who can perform the specific tasks required by a job coach. • The Wyoming Governor's Council held their quarterly meeting in Sheridan on August 11 - 12. They conducted a day-long training with new council members, since there has been a lot of turnover in the last couple of years. The Employment Symposium will be held in Laramie at the University of Wyoming Conference Center on October 5th. If you are interested in attending, reach out to Aleyta Zimmerman. In partnership with By Choice Wyoming, they are working on a guardianship project in which they are reviewing county guardianship hearings and their outcomes in order to determine their next steps. • Protection and Advocacy will be manning their voting hotline on November 8th. If anyone experiences voting issues they should contact P&A. Buck will share informational flyers once they are available. • Erin is enjoying her job! • The Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) and WATR offices are undergoing flood and mold mitigation - please call before visiting WATR or WIND. WIND will be participating in a federal site visit, which has not happened since 2004. A new year of ECHO sessions has begun. Please visit https://www.uwyo.edu/wind/echo/ for more information. • The Wyoming Down Syndrome Association will be hosting the Wyoming Buddy Walk on September 10, 2022 at 9:00am. The Walk will take place at Washington Park in Laramie. For more information or to register, please visit https://www.wydsa.org/. • The week of September 11, 2022 is DSP Recognition Week. Be sure to thank direct support professionals for the work that they do! On September 12, 2022, the Wyoming Community Service Providers will host its 4th Annual DSP of the Year Banquet. The banquet begins at 6:00pm, and will be held at Occasions by Cory in Casper. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to Jeff as soon as possible.
5.	<p><u>Council membership</u></p> <p>Heather (Case Manager) and Erin's (self-advocate) terms expire on September 30, 2022. Both have been invited to reapply for the Council. The Division will send a call for applications. Kayla, Rita, and Sandy volunteered to sit on the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee will review applications and make a recommendation to Director Johansson, who appoints all committee members.</p>
6.	<p><u>Public Comment</u></p> <p>There was no public comment offered during the public comment period.</p>
7.	<p>Erin moved to adjourn the meeting. Rita seconded.</p>
<p>NEXT MEETING – December 1, 2022 - In Person or Zoom</p>	